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CHINESE SECRET SOCIETIES

[Numerals in parenthesis refer to the bibliography]

I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

It is a well-established fact that secret societies have existed in China as far back as the invasion by the Tatar and Mongol tribes in the time of Ch'ing Shih Huang Ti, the emperor who built the Great Wall of China about 2 centuries BC.

Originating at different times and places due to various factors, but with more or less similar objectives, these secret societies had their periods of growth and vitality which were generally followed by periods of subsidence, quiescence, and resurgence.

Many of these societies were at one time or another officially proscribed, yet their traditions still persisted in the hearts of the people. When conditions were such as to create a need for a resumption of activity a resurgence appeared, frequently under a new or different name. This largely accounts for the multiplicity of names and paucity of authentic data with respect to their origins, relationships, objectives, and activities.

Among the early and most prominent of these societies concerning which information is available was the Pai Lien Hsi (White Lotus Society) that was in existence about the end of the Sung dynasty, circa 1200 AD; the T'ien Ti Hsi (Heaven and Earth Society), originating presumably previous to 1660; and the Ho Yao Hsi (Elder Brothers Society) that appeared early in the Manchu Dynasty, circa 1670.

In comparatively recent times, beginning about 50 years ago, these societies or their descendants reappeared and were combined under the names of the Lung Hsa Hsi (Flower Dragon Society) and the San Ho Hsi (Triad Society), whose activities and influence were effectually used in the revolutionary

- 1 -

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50X1-HUM

efforts to overthrow the Manchu dynasty, and subsequently.

A still more recent secret society, organized about 1932, is the Lan I She (Blue Shirts Society) whose principal aim has been to promote and sustain the revolution which ushered in the government of the Republic of China and to perpetuate the present political regime.

In addition to the foregoing, there have existed at various times and places many relatively small or short-lived and unrelated secret societies concerning which little if any authentic information is available.

II. PAI LIEN HUI GROUP

A. Pai Lien Hui (White Lotus Society)

The Pai Lien Hui was started by Tuan Yung towards the end of the Sung Dynasty. Tuan Yung predicted the foreign invasion of the Muchen Tatars /who established the Kin (Gold) dynasty/. He gathered followers in Shensi and Shensi to fight for the preservation of the Sung dynasty, but was defeated. His doctrines, however, spread gradually to Kansu, Szechwan, Kiangsu, Anhwei, Honan, and Hopeh. While the military rulers of the Yuan dynasty were in power, the heavy taxes they exacted along one section of the Yellow River area aroused widespread public resentment. The then leader of the Pai Lien Hui, Han Shan-t'ung, organized a group of people from the Yangtze and Hwai River sections as his followers. Han taught them to use spears and clubs. When the authorities discovered that Han Shan-t'ung, whose followers wore red scarves wrapped around their heads, was about to raise a resistance army of 100,000 men, they had him arrested by official troops and slain. The remnants of Han's followers, however, continued the struggle throughout China, despite their leader's death. The oppression suffered by the Pai Lien Hui became even worse during the Ming dynasty that followed. The rebellious activities of the Pai Lien Hui continued unremittently, however, until the end of the Manchu dynasty. (4)

The formation of the Pai Lien Hui was due solely to the desire of Han Shan-t'ung and others to restore the Sung imperial dynasty to the throne of China in covert resistance to the rulers of the Yuan dynasty. During the first 200 years of the Ming dynasty, the Pai Lien Hui was inactive. However, when the country later became embroiled in civil war, it took advantage of the disorder to extend its influence in Hopeh, Shantung, Shensi, Honan, Shensi, and Szechwan. The members of this society continued to resist all attempts of the authorities to suppress them throughout the whole of the Manchu dynasty. (5)

Existing for periods as different kinds of occupational groups, as time went by the descendants of the early groups scattered and settled in various regions and reorganized themselves into numerous secret societies under different names, having little if any organizational connection other than a more or less common origin. Among these outgrowths of the Pai Lien Hui were:

Pai Yu Hui (White Feather Society)
 San Hsiang Hui (Three Scents Society)
 T'ien Li Chiao (Divine Justice Sect)
 Pa Kua Chiao (Eight Diagrams Sect)
 Ta Ch'eng Chiao (Greater Vehicle Sect)
 Ch'ing Men Chiao (Clear and Bright Sect)
 Pai Yang Chiao (Bright Sun Sect)
 Hung Ch'iang Hui (Red Spear Society)
 Ta Tse Hui (Great Sword Society)
 Hsiao Tao Hui (Small Sword Society)
 I Ho T'uan (The Boxers)
 Tsai Li Chiao (Within Right Principles Sect)

(5)

- 2 -

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50X1-HUM

Wu Chi Tao (The Great Illimitable Sect)

Of these societies, some sprang up only to disappear within a short time. Toward the end of the Manchu dynasty, the Lung Hua Hui (Flowery Dragon Society) unified and utilized a number of them in anti-Manchu activities. The principal one of these societies was the Hung Ch'iang Hui, which had a long and vigorous existence with numerous offsprings. (1)

B. Hung Ch'iang Hui (Red Spear Society)

1. Introduction

In its early stages, the principal aim of the Hung Ch'iang Hui was resistance to bandit depredations. As it increased in size, it came to be utilized by politically ambitious people as a society for wreaking vengeance upon unjust officials, and later unprincipled men induced some of the members to engage in unlawful acts for private advantage. Thus, it became the object of suppression on the part of the authorities. It was forced to become a secret society and the victim of increased oppression. The use of red by secret societies had been customary from olden times, and the emblem of this society came to be the red scarves which they wore wrapped around their heads. They also covered their bodies with red materials, and were even known as the "red soldiers." In their partiality for red, they resemble the Communists. It will be interesting to see in the future if the CCP and Hung Ch'iang Hui try to convert each other to their respective ideas, or whether they will simply come to a friendly understanding. (4)

2. Development

By the time the Chinese Republic had been established and the Lung Hua Hui and its satellites had become inactive, the Hung Ch'iang Hui, in 1918, re-emerged in Shansi and Hopeh as a self-defense organization whose purpose was to counteract the spread of banditry. This movement spread into Shantung, Honan, northern Kiangsu, and north Anhwei. However, when the Northern Expedition began [from Canton in 1926], the privations of the people, suffered at the hands of the military, proved even worse than the previous bandit activities. Consequently, the society's main object came to be opposition to military oppression. This society's members were feared by bandits and soldiers alike because of their bravery. As the conditions of civil disturbance increased in intensity, the society's activities increased, and when conditions improved the society subsided accordingly.

3. Organization

The Hung Ch'iang Hui is very strict with its members in the matter of tenets and rules. Its members must pledge themselves to uphold the following principles:

- a. Respect parents and elders.
- b. Work together with your native village; love your nation.
- c. Be faithful.
- d. Assist those in distress.
- e. Preserve law and order.
- f. Do not engage in evil-doing.

The Hung Ch'iang Hui carries out the following measures with regard to self-defense and independence.

- a. Extermination of bandits.
- b. Extermination of evil soldiers.

- 3 -

CONFIDENTIAL

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50X1-HUM

- c. Opposition to excessive and unscrupulous taxation
- d. Punishment of corrupt officials and local troublemakers

Membership qualifications are somewhat as follows. The prospective member must be:

- a. Over 18 years of age
- b. Engaged in honorable work
- c. Introduced by more than two regular members. (4)

The Hung Ch'iang Hui is said to have a total membership of over 2 million members throughout China. (3)

4. Relationship With Other Secret Societies

Secret societies such as the To Tao Hui and the Hsiao Tao Hui, which were also active in the past, are, for the most part, identical with the Hung Ch'iang Hui. The only point of difference is that whereas a red tassel is affixed to the spears used by the Hung Ch'iang Hui members, the Ta Tao Hui members use a large sword, which is undecorated.

The Hsiao Tao Hui, which originated in Anhwei, at one time numbered several thousand followers who were all armed with small swords. Other societies which sprang up in Shantung as successful antibandit defense organizations were the Hung Sha Hui (Red Sand Society), Huang Sha Hui (Yellow Sand Society), Hung Ying Hui (Red Tassel Society), Chiao Ying Hui (Dazzling Tassel Society), Hung Ch'i Hui (Red Banner Society), Pai Ch'i Hui (White Banner Society), Hung Ch'iang Hui, etc. On the first or fifteenth of every month, these groups burn incense, and carry out special worship services. Such organizations continued to expand because they were the only security from bandit attacks afforded the villagers. Honan, faced with the same bandit problem as Shantung, also established a Hung Ch'iang Hui to serve as a protective force. In 2 or 3 years, the Hung Ch'iang Hui proved so successful against the bandits that its influence extended throughout China. Since bandits were also scattered throughout Kiangsu, groups such as the Pai Ying Hui and Hung Ying Hui (Red Tassel Society) soon were established in this province.

Members who entered the Ying Ch'iang Hui (Tasselled Spear Society) were all armed with old-fashioned spears. However, they were considered as part of the Pai Ying Hui according to whether a white or red cord was affixed to their spears. Many villagers joined these groups since their objective was to provide protection from banditry.

The three most important laws set down by the leaders of these groups were:

- a. Do not steal.
- b. Do not conduct yourselves immorally.
- c. Do not fear death.

By 1927, when the Northern Expedition began, the Hung Ch'iang Hui became known as the chief opponent of military oppression. Its influence not only existed in Shantung and Honan, but extended throughout all the region north of the Yangtze River and into the three northeastern provinces of Manchuria.

The Hung Ch'iang Hui maintained friendly relations with other groups that were carrying on self-defense and self-governing activities, such as the Huang Ch'iang Hui (Yellow Spear Society), Lu Ch'iang Hui (Green Spear Society), Hui Ch'iang Hui (Gay-Colored Spear Society), and the Sun Chen Ta Hsien Hui

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50X1-HUM

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(True Followers of Dr Sun Society), etc. Whenever suitable, the Hung Ch'iang Hui tried to bring about an alliance of these various friendly groups.

The Lu Ch'iang Hui, Huang Ch'iang Hui, Pai Ch'iang Hui (White Spear Society), and Hei Ch'iang Hui (Black Spear Society) were all patterned after the Hung Ch'iang Hui. The organization of these societies was almost identical with that of the Hung Ch'iang Hui. The only difference was in regard to the color of the tassel affixed to their spear. These spear wielders were quite influential in villages of Shantung and Honan.

The Hei Ch'ang Hui influenced ignorant people by means of superstition and nonsensical practices. It was founded by Lu T'ing-sha, a native of Hopeh Province. Lu T'ing-sha successfully defeated a group of bandits in battle, and emerged unharmed himself. As a result, his believers increased greatly in number.

There were also four banner societies related to the Hung Ch'iang Hui, known as the Huang Ch'i Hui (Yellow Banner Society), Hei Ch'i Hui (Black Banner Society), Pai Ch'i Hui (White Banner Society), and Ch'ing Ch'i Hui (Blue Banner Society). Their inner make-up was for the most part, identical.

The Huang Ch'i Hui was active in western and southwestern Shantung. In 1929, this group's followers in Chang-shan Hsien rebelled against Feng Yushiang. More than 10,000 members of the Hei Ch'i Hui and Ch'ing Ch'i Hui in southern Shantung then raided the farmers, and conducted themselves like bandit groups. During the revolutionary battles that were waged in China, the members of these groups fought bravely to keep troupes of both contending military factions out of Shantung. (3)

The Huang Sha Hui has experienced a very swift development in An-yang [presumably in Honan Province] and throughout Honan and Shantung.

The Hung Sha Hui is located in Shantung. (1)

The Sun Chen Ta Hsien Hui (Society of True Followers of Sun Yat-sen) was one of several small societies that appeared during the period 1911-1921 to promote self-defense and self-government. Being friendly to the Hung Ch'iang Hui, they were taken under its wing for mutual assistance and protection. (4)

C. Ta Tao Hui (Great Sword Society)

1. Origin

The Ta Tao Hui was founded in western Tung-ch'ang District, Shantung Province, during the Kuang Hsu era [1875-1908]. It is a branch of the Pai Lien Hui, and was organized at the suggestion of Chang T'u-fu.

Since Wang Ta Tac has also been reported as the leader of the Ta Tao Hui, and Jen Yu-kuei as the leader of the Hung Ch'iang Hui, it can be seen that the difference between these societies is, for the most part, one of name only. They are all quite similar as regards belief and organization. (1)

In 1897 Liu Shih-t'uan, P'eng Hwei-lin, and other leaders of the Pai Lien Hui declared their opposition to Christianity, and advocated the persecution of all Chinese Christians, whom they considered as secondary foreign devils. There were more than 10,000 members of the Ta Tao Hui in Shantung Province at that time. They disobeyed government orders, and also refused to pay taxes. The Magistrate of Tung-Ch'ang District, Hung Yuch-chou,

- 5 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1-HUM

aroused by this highhanded behavior of the Ta Tao Hui, sent a punitive force against the rebels. As a result, many Ta Tao Hui leaders were either killed or forced to flee for their lives. However, this action only served to extend the influence enjoyed by the Ta Tao Hui, as a result of the popular indignation that was aroused against this official oppression. (1)

2. Development

The Ta Tao Hui gradually increased their opposition to despotic and corrupt authorities, and to military vagabonds. As a result, the Ta Tao Hui itself came to be called an outlaw organization. Ta Tao Hui membership greatly increased during the revolutionary period, due to the defense it provided against the attacks of scattered troops and bandits. This society exerted great influence in the Chiao-chou, Kao-mi, P'ing-tu, and Chu-Ch'ong areas of Shantung. It maintained contact with these various areas through its leaders. (1)

Soon afterwards, in October 1897, Christian churches were destroyed and two German priests were killed in Tsao-chou (Ko-tse), Shantung Province. The consequent occupation of Chia-chou-wan by Germany was directly attributable to the above activities of the Ta Tao Hui. (1)

In 1897, Liu T'u-t'uan and other leaders of the Ta Tao Hui, a branch of the Pai Lien Hui, enraged over the recalcitrance of Christianity, broke into Christian churches in Shantung and killed two German priests. As a result of this incident, Germany demanded and obtained from China an indemnity and a 99 year lease over Chiao-chou-wan (Kiaochow Bay) (near Ch'ing-tao). When Germany sent in troops to occupy Chiao-chou-wan, the Hsiao Tao Hui (see below), still another branch of the Pai Lien Hui, proclaimed their intention to expel the Germans. This anticipated action was quelled, however, by the swift action of the Chinese authorities in Shantung. After the "Christianity incident," just as the original secret societies had resisted the northern barbarians, so the Pai Lien Hui and its modern branches developed an attitude of animosity and resistance toward all foreigners in China. This antiforeign movement was later to culminate in the Boxer Rebellion.

It has been reported there are now (1932) more than one million Ta Tao Hui members in Shantung Province, and over 10,000 members in Manchuria. However, it is impossible accurately to check these figures.

3. Organization

The procedure in joining the Ta Tao Hui is a simple one. A prospective member, after obtaining the approval of the local Ta Tao Hui leader, pays an entrance fee of 3 yuan to the eldest member. The prospective member then pledges himself to uphold the regulations, and to accept whatever punishment is deemed proper by the society if he violates the regulations.

The following are the regulations which govern this society:

- a. This society is to be called the Ta Tao Hui.
- b. All prospective members must receive at least 2 months training.
- c. Five members constitute a squad; ten members constitute a platoon. There shall be one leader and one instructor assigned to each squad and each platoon.
- d. Specially qualified members shall be sent to each hsien in order to carry out the following objectives:

- 6 -

CONFIDENTIAL

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50X1-HUM

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- officials.
- (1) Assassinate the governor, police chief, and other high officials.
 - (2) Create confusion by attacking government offices.
 - (3) Seize the weapons and provisions of the punitive military forces.
 - (4) Obstruct the passage and movement of punitive military forces.
 - (5) Destroy telegraph and telephone lines, and other means of communication

f. Assemble at all cities and towns before initiating operations.

g. The following awards are to be granted to meritorious members:

- (1) For assassinating a governor, police chief or other important official--5,000 yuan.
- (2) For assassinating a lien [a company of 126 soldiers] commander, customs director, or head of a police district--3,000 yuan.
- (3) For assassinating policemen or customs officials--2,000 yuan.
- (4) To any member who brings in the decapitated heads of ten armed soldiers--1,000 yuan.

4. Relationship With Other Secret Societies

The objectives of the Ta Tao Hui are identical with those of the Hung Ch'iang Hui. This organization was also primarily a means of providing self-defense for the villages. Whenever a neighboring village was attacked by outsiders, all Ta Tao Hui members rushed to its defense, armed with great swords. When things were peaceful, each member attended to his own work in his respective village. Since they all shared the common religious attitude that death would signify a return [to everlasting life], their bravery was on a par with that of the Hung Ch'iang Hui members. The Ta Tao Hui, however, was said to have more wealthy members than the Hung Ch'iang Hui. The members of both societies believe that the training they undergo renders them impervious to swords, spears, or bullets.

D. Hsiao Tao Hui (Small Sword Society)

The religious doctrines followed by the Hsiao Tao Hui are very similar to those of the Ta Tao Hui. Moreover, this group planned an uprising in opposition to the occupation of Chiao-chou-wan by Germany in 1897. At present (1932) the Hsiao Tao Hui is scattered throughout Shantung Province where it serves as a self-defense organization. (1)

E. I Ho T'uan (The Boxers)

The I Ho T'uan was also a branch of the Pai Lien Hui, whose influence was dominant throughout Shantung and Hopeh. In 1900 they became violently active, destroying Christian churches, killing Christians, and surrounding the foreign legations in Pei-p'ing. Allied troops of eight nations were later used to bring about an end to this movement. (5)

In 1900, the I Ho T'uan, under the slogan "assist the Manchus to exterminate the foreigners," staged the famous Boxer incident. It was a branch of the Pai Lien Hui which had started from the Pa Kua Chiao (Eight Diagrams Sect).

- 7 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1-HUM

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It also had its branches known as the Ch'ien Tzu Ch'uan Ch'ien Character Band, Li Tzu Ch'uan Li Character Band, and the Chen Tzu Ch'uan Chen Character Band. These organizations believed that the performance of certain magic rituals would protect them from being injured by gunfire. Their members were taught boxing and fencing. Even today (1952) their members are scattered throughout Hopeh and that part of the Yellow River area which extends through Honan and Shantung. (1)

F. Tsai Li Chiao (Right Principles Sect)

The Tsai Li Chiao was another branch of the Pai Lien Hui which arose early in the Manchu dynasty. It was active in Honan, Shantung, and Manchuria. The reason for calling this branch the Tsai Li Chiao was the fact that its followers obeyed the precepts of Buddhism, practiced the moral standards of Taoism, and observed the proprieties of Confucianism. The Tsai Li Chiao forbade smoking, debriation, the burning of incense, and the erection of graven images. In 1926 there were many Manchurian mounted bandits who belonged to this secret society.

All these branches of the Pai Lien Hui professed some degree of religious faith, and these beliefs inevitably entailed a certain amount of ignorant practices. But the influence of such secret societies as the San Ho Hui and the Ko Lao Hui, whose objectives were purely political in nature, are doing away with adherence to religious ceremony. In this way, these societies have perfected their secret nature. (5)

G. Wu Chi Tao (Great Illimitable Sect)1. Origin

The Wu Chi Tao is similar to the Hung Ch'iang Hui in that it also originated as a branch of the Pai Lien Hui. The Wu Chi Tao consists of armed groups which provide self-defense for the villages. The exact date of origin of this secret society is not known.

2. Development

By March 1929, the Wu Chi Tao was active in the Chi-ning, I-hsien, Yu-t'ai, and Yen-chow sectors of Shantung Province. When the Southern Government tried to institute reforms in this area such as the liberation of women, abolition of idol worship and other superstitious beliefs, the Wu Chi Tao rose up in arms. Led by Yang Leo-tao, the Temple Superior of T'eng-hsien, they destroyed railroad tracks and attacked the main cities in the district.

3. Relationship With Other Secret Societies

Leaders of the Wu Chi Tao, such as Ch'ia Ta-hsing, Jen Yu-kuei, and Wang Ta Tao, live quietly at a place located 19 li west of Chi-ning. (1)

III. SAN HO HUI GROUPA. T'ien Ti Hui (Heaven and Earth Society)

The T'ien Ti Hui reportedly originated /presumably sometime prior to 1660 AD/ in a monastery named Shao-lin-ts'u in Chin-lien Shan, P'u-t'ien Hsien, Fu-chow-fu, Fukien Province.

- 8 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1-HUM

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This temple was said to have been erected by Bodhidharma and to have been 1,000 years old at the time the T'ien Ti Hui was founded. It was known to have been situated in a mountain retreat and to have been of magnificent appearance. (5)

B. San Ho Hui (Triad Society)**1. Origin**

The San Ho Hui was the name adopted by the T'ien Ti Hui about 1675, when it secretly undertook to wreak vengeance upon the officials who had killed priests of the Shao-lin-ts'u Monastery.

2. Development

Throughout the period 1675 to 1911, the avowed objective of the San Ho Hui, also sometimes known as San Tien Hui (Three Point Society), was the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty. It was so successful in its battles against the Manchu officials that by the middle of the 19th Century, San Ho Hui members were firmly entrenched in Taiwan, Kwangtung, Kwangsi, and other parts of South China, as well as in Fukien. Branches of the San Ho Hui were also known as the Ch'ing Shui Hui (Pure Water Society), Ch'i (Seven Chieftains Society), Shuang Tao Hui (Double Sword Society), etc.

At the end of the 19th Century, the San Ho Hui became the energetic supporters in South China of Sun Yat-sen in the revolutionary activities which resulted in 1911-1912 in the establishment of the Chinese Republic.

The San Ho Hui also established and maintained branches overseas, and had considerable influence among the overseas Chinese. It rendered considerable aid to these overseas Chinese in cases of sickness, death, or other emergencies. Because of these benevolent activities, many overseas Chinese joined the San Ho Hui. (5)

3. Relationship With Other Secret Societies

The San Ho Hui apparently was the principal one of the secret societies whose influence extended throughout South China. More than 30 secret societies were affiliated with the San Ho Hui. Furthermore, its branches extended their activities to the Philippines, Hawaii, America, and Europe.

Something of the relationship in which some of these societies stand with respect to each other is represented by the saying that the Fung Pang is the head of the San Ho Hui, the Ch'ing Pang is its trunk, and the various factions of Kwangtung and Kwangsi are its tail. (2)

C. Hung Pang (Red Fraternity, or Magnanimous Fraternity)

The Hung Pang was organized as a secret society during the Manchu dynasty by unscrupulous soldiers who engaged in assassinations, kidnapping, robbery, and smuggling. One of its cliques, lead by Wang Ya-ch'iao, because of its villainous membership, was best known for its unparalleled brutality. When the war with Japan broke, bandit groups such as the Hung Pang engaged in anti-Japanese activities under the name of the Hung Men. (2)

D. Ch'ing Pang (Clear, or Pure, Fraternity)

This prominent secret society began to assume large proportions from about 1727, when the Manchu Government arranged with its leaders to handle

- 9 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1-HUM

the transportation of tribute grain along the Grand Canal. In course of time, its activities were somewhat modified, but up to the present it has had a continuous existence and large influence. Its members for the most part have been laborers, stevedores, rivermen, and seamen, and are said to number several million. Its activities and leadership center at Shanghai where there are not less than 100,000 members.

E. Hung Men (Magnanimous Gate Society, or Magnanimity Sect)

Members of the Hung Men, which is affiliated with the Sen Ho Hui, were often spoken of in Japan as the overseas Chinese who wanted to save the KMT from annihilation. At present (1939) it is continuing its fight against Japan through an alliance with such anti-Chiang factions as the Pai Ch'ung-hsi, Li Chi-ch'au, and Ch'au Ming Shu groups.

IV. KO LAO HUI GROUP

A. Ko Lao Hui (Society of Elder Brothers)

This secret society originated about 1670 with tenets of humanity and justice, prohibitions against unlawful activities, and the policy of protecting the poor and overthrowing the rich. About the same time or sometime subsequently, factions or branches appeared under various names, among which were the Ch'ing Pang (Pure Fraternity), Hei Pang (Black Fraternity), Pai Pang (White Fraternity), Lung Hua Hui (Flowery Dragon Society), and the Tsai Chia Li (At Home Society).

Among these Ko Lao Hui factions, the Ch'ing Pang has come to be regarded as the main legitimate descendant of the Ko Lao Hui; the Hei Pang and Pai Pang degenerated into bands of thieves and beggars whose plundering activities were thoroughly detested by the Ko Lao Hui. The Lung Hua Hui much later emerged again as a revolutionary organization.

B. Tsai Chia Li (At Home Society)

1. Origin

The Tsai Chia Li was founded by P'an Te Lin, who was among the original founders of the Ch'ing Pang. He was also believed to have been a member of the Ko Lao Hui. Unlike the Pa Tao Hui and the Hung Ch'ian Hui, which were primarily self-defense organizations formed by farmers, the Tsai Chia Li adopted the principle of "live and let live." Guided by this tenet, it occasionally plays a major role in labor disputes and similar activities. It also assists in wedding ceremonies, funerals, mourning, and various charitable activities.

Its leaders and masters have hundreds and sometimes thousands of disciples. It is rumored that members of the armed secret societies, such as the Pa Tao Hui and the Hung Ch'ian Hui, and most of the mounted bandits also belong to the Tsai Chia Li. The late Chang Isung-Chiang [former military governor of Shantung Province] was widely known as a Tsai Chia Li member, and so were most of his subordinates.

There is a general belief that almost every policeman of the Kwangtung Government General is a Tsai Chia Li member.

The Tsai Chia Li has been gaining considerable influence lately by obtaining many members from the military, government, commercial, and industrial fields. In Manchuria, its influence thrives especially in Ta-lien (Dairen), Ying-k'ou, Fu-shun, Shen-yang (Mukden), Pan-ch'i-hu, An-tung, Ch'ang-ch'un, Chi-lin, and Ha-erh-pin. It has over 3,000 members each in the cities of Ta-lien, An-tung, Fu-shun, Shen-yang, Chi-lin, and Ha-erh-pin, and more

- 10 -

CONFIDENTIAL

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50X1-HUM

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than 1,000 members in each of the other cities mentioned above.

Its activities in Manchuria have been carried out quietly and because of its highly secret nature, it is extremely difficult to ascertain the true facts; it is believed, however, that formidable power might be displayed by this organization should it ever stage an uprising for political or other purposes.

2. Membership

It generally requires two or more sponsors to recommend a new member to the organization. Membership consists of soldiers, merchants, farmers, government officials, and others representing all walks of life. On the whole, industrial workers and jobless idlers constitute the bulk of membership. Persons with questionable backgrounds and those who engage in menial occupations such as barbers, butchers, entertainers, and coolies, were entirely excluded in the past, but that policy is no longer observed today. The initiation ceremony somewhat resembles that of the Ch'ing Pang, but it varies with the locality. Any legitimate member may obtain full support and the protection of his life and property from the organization irrespective of his social standing. Although many of its activities are of a charitable nature, rendered to its own members, it cannot be called a charitable organization as such.

3. Relationship to the Ch'ing Pang

The Tsai Chia Li members uniformly call each other "P'an," which is the name of founder, thereby indicating their identity as members.

The Tsai Chia Li members today claim that the Ch'ing Pang, Pai Pang, Hsi Pang, and Hung Pang are all composite elements of the Tsai Chia Li. This claim, if true, would make the existence of a separate entity called the Tsai Chia Li questionable. However, it seems likely that this claim sprang from their desire to exaggerate the size of their secret society.

The influence of the Ch'ing Pang and Hung Pang is predominant over that of the Tsai Chia Li in Shang-hai and the Ch'ang Chiang Yangtze River area. However, the Tsai Chia Li, rather than the Ch'ing Pang, predominates in the area from Shantung to Manchuria. This fact leads to a probability that the Tsai Chia Li may be actually a sect of the larger organization, Ch'ing Pang, a probability quite contrary to what is claimed by the Tsai Chia Li members. Nothing is certain about this matter except that they all have the same origin.

Tsai Chia Li, nevertheless, has its legitimate factions called the Pai Ling Hui (White Spirit Society), Chin Chia Hui (Gold Family Society), etc., Lin Hsing Hui (T'ien-ching Neighborhood Society), etc., which are all collectively referred to as the Tsai Chia Li. (1)

V. REVOLUTIONARY SECRET SOCIETIES

A. Hsin Chung Hui

The Hsin Chung Hui was founded in 1892, mainly through the efforts of Sun Yat-sen. Its objective was the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty. Its leaders, including Sun, were later forced to seek refuge abroad.

B. T'ung Men Hui

1. Organization

- 11 -

CONFIDENTIAL

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50X1-HUM

In 1904, Sun Yat-sen organized a united revolutionary party known as the T'ung Meng Hui. Dr Sun was proclaimed its leader. Six important revolutionary principles were later adopted by the society. They were:

- a. The overthrow of the present weak and despotic government
- b. The establishment of a political party based on republican principles
- c. The support of genuine world peace
- d. Land nationalization
- e. Unification of the Chinese and Japanese people
- f. The institution of Chinese reforms by obtaining the support of the World Powers.

2. Development

After the T'ung Meng Hui had been organized, all revolutionary party members returned to China and kept up liaison with one another. Sun Yat-sen travelled to many countries in order to obtain funds for the revolution. Huang Hsing conducted revolutionary activities both in and out of China. In 1908 and 1909 Huang caused disturbances in Ch'in-chow, Ma-tu-shan, and Ho-k'ou. In January 1910, there was an unsuccessful revolt in Kwangchow led by Ni Ying-tien. On 29 March 1911, Huang Hsing and other revolutionaries who were in Kwangchow trying to raise a revolutionary corps of volunteers, were apprehended by the authorities. Even though they put up a strong defense and set fire to the Office of the Governor General, these revolutionary forces were finally routed. Seventy-two men, including Huang, were killed in this battle. The Chinese Revolution that broke out at Wu-ch'ang soon afterwards was a direct consequence of the above incident.

3. Relationship With Other Secret Societies

In May 1908, the Hsu Hsi-lin Incident occurred. Hsu was a native of Chekiang who had formed the Fu Ku Hui (Restore the Old Society) with its central headquarters at Shang-hai. The activities of Hsu and fellow members of this society gradually became known to the world.

Another revolutionary organization known as the Kuang Fu Hui (Return of Light Society) was established. Its members all wore gold badges. The leaders were designated by the character that was engraved on their badges, since each character had a secret significance. Under the guise of establishing day schools at Shao-hsing-fu, this society chiefly stressed military training in preparation for the revolution.

Hsu bribed his way into the position of manager of the Anhui Police School. While attempting to stage an uprising through his military authority, he forestalled the desire of the Military Governor of Anhui Province, Ma Ming, to seize and search all revolutionary party members by personally attacking and assassinating him and a number of his associates. This incident shows why the high military officials of the Manchu Government greatly feared the assassination tactics of the revolutionists. (5)

4. Kuang Fu Hui (Return of Light Public Society)

1. Origin

There are many secret societies in the southeastern provinces. These are particularly prevalent in Kweichow and Kwangtung Provinces. The Kuang Fu Hui was established in Kweichow Province by Huang Tse Ling.

- 12 -

CONFIDENTIAL

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50X1-HUM

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2. Development

Before the Chinese Revolution, the Kuang Fu Kung Hui was very secret and comparatively uninfluential. However, after the revolution had succeeded, the Kuang Fu Kung Hui came out into the open, and subsequently experienced rapid development both in Kweichow Province and outside of it. The remarkable success of the revolution in Kweichow Province was due, for the most part, to the power wielded by Huang Tse-lin, its leader.

Huang Tse-lin activated an army through the cooperation of Chang Shih-ch'i and Chao Te-ch'uan. In that way, Huang succeeded in making the Kuang Fu Kung Hui a center of military influence which reached a point where almost all military and political officials in the area, irrespective of their relative importance, were Kuang Fu Kung Hui members.

3. Organization

The following constitutes a brief sketch of the present personnel [1925] in the Kuang Fu Kung Hui:

- a. Director Huang Fu-ch'ing [alternate name for Huang Tse Lin]
- b. Assistant Director: Li Ch'ing-ch'ih
- c. Ceremonial Supervisors: Sun Ju-wei, Chiang Hsi-lin, Li Hsu-yuan, Jao I-ch'ing, K'ung Ch'eng-chiu
- d. Pledge Supervisors: Lan Shao-t'ing, Huang Chin-yao, Chou Yu-shan, Ch'en Ch'in-ch'en
- e. Military Commanders: T'ien Ch'uan-ch'ing, Chin T'ien-ch'eng, Ch'en Lan-shang, Chang Chu-hsing
- f. Prefects: Ch'en Sung-shan, Tsan Sen-chih, Yang Yu-t'ang, Yeh Feng-ch'un
- g. Magistrates (on the left): Ch'eng Yao-t'ang, Ku Yun-ch'ien, Li Hsi-hsing, Liu Kuei-ch'u
- h. Court Administrators: Chen Sung-fu, Hsiao Jui-t'ang, Yen Sung-shan
- i. Court Deputies: T'ang Ts'an-chang, Li Hsien-ch'un, Nieh Hsi-ho, Lung Li-pin
- j. Court Assistants (on the right): Chiang Wu-tzu, Sun Yun-po, Wu Hsiang-ling, Yang Ch'un-shan
- k. Court Executives: Chiang Ca'un-t'ing, Chu Ch'un-t'ing, Min Chao-hsing, Wang Huan-chang
- l. Assistant Magistrates: Wu Chi-hsuan, Tai Chi-chih, Hsiao Tao-shang, Ch'en Wen-pin
- m. Judges: Sung Jung-shan, Leng Yu-shan, Li Shu-ch'ing, Huang Chien-ch'ing
- n. In Charge of New Members: Chin Wei-pin, Chin Hsi-jui, Cheng Ho-ch'ing, Ch'en Fan-shan
- o. Recorder of Heroic Deeds: Ho P'ei-wu
- p. Lower ranking officers and members were: Stewards, Managers, Guardians, and eight other subordinate classifications.

4. Relationship With Other Secret Societies

The regulations and personnel classifications of this society are almost identical with those used by the Ko Lao Hui. Some persons have recently asserted that the Kuang Fu Kung Hui is a branch of the Ko Lao Hui. (5)

D. United Association of Military Youth, Society for Study of Sun Yat-sen's Doctrines, Huang-p'u Academy Alumni Association

These three organizations were composed of faculty members, students, and

- 13 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1-HUM

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graduates of the Kuang-p'u Military Academy at Kuang-chou (Canton), existing in the period from 1920 to 1931. The first of these was composed of Communist Party supporters. The latter two were groups formed to counteract the former and to afford some protection from Communist pressure. These two groups received secret encouragement from Chiang K'ai-shek and gradually became more positive and aggressive.

B. CC Clique

1. Origin

The CC Clique came into prominence following the break with the Communists in Nan-k'ou in 1928. Its leaders were Ch'en Li-fu and his brother Ch'en Kuo-fu, both of whom were trusted supporters of Chiang K'ai-shek holding important positions in the KMT. It was from the start strongly anti-Communist. It is uncertain as to whether the letters CC represent the capital letters of the "Central Club" or the initials of Ch'en Kuo-fu and Ch'en Li-fu. (2)

2. Organization

The structural composition of the CC Clique is as follows:

- a. The Central Party Executive Committee
- b. Investigation Section of the Organization Committee
- c. Supreme Executive Council
- d. Personnel

(1) Director: Ch'en Kuo-fu
 (2) Assistant Director: Ch'en Li-fu
 (3) Administrative Head: Hsu Sau-tseng, Secretary of the Central Organization Committee
 (4) Secretary for Party Affairs: Hung Lan-chih
 (5) Secretary for Special Affairs: Ch'en Ch'ang-chao
 (6) Staff Members: Hung Lu-tung, Yu Ching-t'ang, Miao P'ei-ch'ang, Fang Chiao-hui, Ting Ch'ao-wu, Ch'en Chao-chi, Yeh Ch'u-ts'ang, Niu Tung-chien, Wang Ch'i, Chueh Liang, Li Tsung-huang (the foregoing are all members of the Central Party Headquarters), Chang Ch'ang, Lo Mei-ying, Hsueh Ch'ang-yu, Wu Chia-yu.

F. Alumni Investigation Office, United Association of China's Revolutionary Soldiers, and Chinese Youth Association

The first of these three organizations appeared in 1930 after Generalissimo Chiang K'ai-shek had ordered the closing of the Kuang-p'u Military Academy Alumni Association. Its members were all pledged to support Chiang, and its office afforded a front and facilities for the secret activities of Chiang's supporters.

The latter two associations had similar objectives, that is, support of Chiang, but seeing that their leaders were mutually jealous and antagonistic, he ordered these contending factions to be dissolved and their members amalgamated into one organization under the name of the Lan I She.

G. Lan I She (Blue Shirts Society)

Growing out of the developments indicated in the preceding paragraphs, the Lan I She was formed in 1932. Its clear objectives were the formation of a

- 14 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

50X1-HUM

nucleus of trustworthy and zealous men within the KMT loyal to Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles and to the leadership of Chiang K'ai-shek in coping with the twofold danger of the Chinese Communists and the Japanese invaders.

1. Relationship Between the CC Clique and the Lan I She

Some people believe that the CC Clique and the Lan I She are one and the same organization, while still others assert that the Lan I She is an outgrowth of the CC Clique. It is undeniable, however, that both are secret organizations serving under Chiang K'ai-shek for the common purpose of stabilizing his dictatorial power. Nevertheless, they differ markedly in that while the Lan I She is a military clique composed of Huang-p'u Military Academy graduates, the CC clique, on the other hand, is inherently a body composed of graduates of the Central Political Science School which is headed by Ch'en Li-fu and Ch'en Kuo-fu. Other differences between these two organizations may be cited.

a. While the CC Clique supports the Three People's Principles (San Min Chu I), the Lan I She is largely guided by Fascist ideology and acts as the spearhead of Chiang's dictatorial power.

b. When the sphere of their influence is compared, the CC Clique is influential in cities and provinces where the central political power of the KMT is directly exerted, whereas the Lan I She is influential notably in military circles and in the rural districts.

c. While both persistently adhere to an anti-Japanese policy, the Lan I She manifests this policy by means of terroristic activities and the CC Clique carries out the same policy through propaganda activities.

In compliance with Chiang K'ai-shek's attempt to manipulate these two characteristically different agencies in order to exterminate Communist elements within the Nationalist government, the Lan I She and the CC Clique cooperated closely for some time. Their activities included the arrest and assassination of Communists and other insurgents that collaborated with the Japanese. This cooperation, however, soon terminated as a conflict arose between the CC Clique and the Lan I She leaders headed by Cheng Wen-i. This conflict ushered in a period of ceaseless contention between these two groups.

Both the CC Clique and the Lan I She were believed (in 1941) to be supporting the fifth-column activities and guerrilla warfare of the Eight Route Army. (3)

The Lan I She's influence extends to the masses, while the CC Clique's influence is mostly confined within the party organization. The latter, however, has been exerting itself in North China, notably in T'ien-ching and Pei-p'ing, where it has been directing the anti-Japanese boycott of goods and the students' anti-Japanese movement. It was likely also that the CC Clique was involved in the T'ung-chow Incident [probably refers to the annihilation of about 100 Japanese in the western part of T'ung hsen, near Pei-p'ing, by Chinese troops on 27 July 1937] which led up to the China Incident. (2)

VI. MISCELLANEOUS SECRET SOCIETIES

The number, names, and geographical location and areas of various small secret societies is almost endless. However, for the most part, their membership, influence and duration were comparatively limited, as is also the data available concerning them. In general, they were made up chiefly of farmers

- 15 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1-HUM

CONFIDENTIAL
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for the purpose of self-defense against bandits and military oppression. While patterned after the larger societies such as the Hung Ch'iang Hui and the Pai Lien Chiao, there was little connection with each other, and a great variety with respect to beliefs, practices, uniforms, weapons and methods of fighting. A few examples of these smaller organizations are given below.

A. Hua Lan Hui (Flower Basket Society)

The Hua Lan Hui was reportedly started by a woman. This society believes that if a warrior is armed with a spear in the right hand and a flower basket in the left hand, the enemy's bullets will all fall into the basket. Traces of this society's activities have been discovered in scattered places in Shantung, and in Honan between Fang-ch'iu and Yang-wu.

B. Shan Tzu Hui (Fan Society)

The Shan Tzu Hui respects women and regards motherhood as sacred. Their members use a sacred sword and a sacred fan in battle, believing that they can escape the enemy's bullets by waving the fan.

C. Hsiung Ti Hui (Younger Brothers Society)

The Hsiung Ti Hui members are said to chant the word "Hsiung Ti" when in battle.

D. Hua Ling Hui (Gay Scarf Society)

The Hua Ling Hui are said to wrap yellow silk gauze around their heads before engaging in warfare.

E. T'ien Shen Hui (Society of Heavenly Spirits)

The T'ien Shen Hui has appeared recently in Kuo-T'ou-kou, Hopeh Province. Members of this society destroy dragon effigies with their swords and spears.

F. Hieh Tzu Hui (Society of Stealthy Sons)

The leader of the Hieh Tzu is Chao-szu. Its members are numerous in the vicinity of Ch'uan-ch'iao (Shantung). The leaders of the Hieh Tzu Hui, at the time of battle, mutter incantations over a bowl of water which they stir with the thumb and forefinger.

G. Yueh Ming Hui (Twilight Men Society)

The Yueh Ming Hui members lay hidden during the day, but launched attacks against their enemies at night.

H. Ma I Hui (Sackcloth Society)

The Ma I Hui has also been called the Lao I Hui (Old Clothes Society). Its members were well known because they wore white mourning garments during battles with an enemy.

I. Pai T'ou Hui (White Heads Society)

The Pai T'ou Hui members, in order to be protected from enemy spears and guns during battle, wrap white cloth around their heads and chests.

J. Other Societies

The Pai Lien Chiao (White Lotus Sect), Huang Chiao Hui (Yellow Sect Society),

- 16 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1-HUM

CONFIDENTIAL
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T'ien Li Chiao (Moral Rectitude Sect), Pa Kua Chiao (Eight Diagram Sect), Liu I Hui (Righteous Weapon Society), Hung Teng Hui (Red Lantern Society), and T'ien Men Hui (Heavenly Gate Society) are prevalent in northern Honan. While they originated from the same source as the Hung Ch'iang Hui (Red Spears Society), they are arch enemies of that secret society. The T'ien Men Hui differs from the Hung Ch'iang Hui in that it believes exclusively in magic rituals rather than formal ceremonies.

Other Societies are the Jih Kuang Hui (Sunlight Society), Chin Teng Chao (Golden Lamp Shade), Ta Ksien Hui (Great Spirits Society), Lan Ying Hui (Blue Tassel Society), T'ien Tzu Hui (Son of Heaven Society), Wu Lung Hui (Five Dragon Society), Chen Wu Hui (True Military Society), Shih Tao Hui (Sword Wielding Society), and T'i Ha Hui (Tears and Laughter Society). (1)

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- E N D -

- 17 -

CONFIDENTIAL

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